साइड किया है कि we will review the RRBs. The Group C posts are filled by the RRBs, and it has to decide how to fill it up. The Sixth Pay Commission has said that there will be no Group D posts and the existing Group D posts will be merged with the Group C. So, we have to examine all this and then we will come back.

श्री ईश्वर सिंह : सभापति जी, मैं आपके माध्यम से ऑनरेबल मिनिस्टर जी से पूछना चाहता हूं कि जो जोन वाइज बैक लॉग क्या अलग-अलग किया है या जैसाकि अभी मंत्री महोदय ने आश्वासन दिया है कि एस.सी./एस.टी. का बैकलॉग जल्दी पूरा किया जाएगा, क्या यह 2009-10 के बीच में विशेष अभियान चलाकर पूरा किया जाएगा?

SHRI E. AHAMMED: Mr. Chairman, Sir, we have the entire backlog of the Railway. The zonal backlog has not been collected. But, if the hon. Member would like to have it, we will collect that.

Vacant posts in Railways

*102. SHRI TAPAN KUMAR SEN:††
SHRI MOHAMMED AMIN:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the sanctioned manpower in the Indian Railways, category-wise;

(b) the number of vacant posts against the sanctioned manpower;

(c) the time-bound action plan to fill up the vacant posts;

(d) the number of contract workers in Railways both skilled and unskilled; and

(e) the steps taken to regularize the contract employees in perennial services?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI E. AHAMMAD) : (a) to (e) A Statement is laid on the Table of the Sabha.

Statement

(a) and (b) The sanctioned strength and vacancies on Indian Railways, category-wise as on 31.3.2008 is as under: -

Category	Sanctioned strength	Vacancies
A & B	17680	1549
C	1020076	112566
D	529208	58329
TOTAL :	1566964	172444

(c) Any large organization like the Railways will have certain vacancies at any point of time. Arising and filling up of vacancies is a continuous process. Vacancies arise due to normal retirement, voluntary retirements, deaths, promotions or creation of posts etc. Vacancies are filled in primarily through open market recruitment, promotions etc.

††The question was actually asked on the floor of the House by Shri Tapan Kumar Sen

(d) and (e) Indian Railways are not directly connected with the number of persons engaged by the contractors. Therefore, such figures are not maintained in Railways.

SHRI TAPAN KUMAR SEN: Mr. Chairman, Sir, through you, I want to ask a specific question. My first supplementary is this. The deliberations on the Railway Budget were completed in this House yesterday. In this Budget, the hon. Railway Minister has taken up a very ambitious programme of expansion. In her Budget Speech, the hon. Minister has said about introduction of 57 new trains, 27 extension of service and doubling of frequencies of 13 trains. Besides that, there is a big expansion programme in the suburban and Metro railways, which requires augmentation of manpower. In this context, the written answer of the hon. Railway Minister shows an alarming figure of 1,72,444 vacancies against the sanctioned strength, as on 31st March, 2008. Sir, my question is, the kind of ambitious projects for expansion that have been taken up warrants an increase in the sanctioned strength also. But, the fact remains that in many of these categories, I can particularly refer to Group D, the sanctioned strength has been reviewed downwards, meaning thereby abolishing a part of the sanctioned posts. So, my first supplementary is whether this abolition in posts will be scrapped. In the case of Group D, this figure has come down from 6,00,000 to 5,29,000.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Please put your question.

SHRI TAPAN KUMAR SEN: Sir, I am coming to my question. This gives rise to the question. Part (a) of my supplementary is, whether the hon. Minister will review the sanctioned strength in view of the big ambitious projects taken up by the Railways. I would also like the hon. Minister to assure the House a concrete timeframe by which time these 1,72,444 vacancies will be filled up.

SHRI E. AHAMMED: Mr. Chairman, Sir, so far, the policy being followed by the Railways is, whenever vacancies arise, it will have to be filled up. Therefore, whatever the hon. Member has now mentioned with respect to the sanctioned strength which has not been filled up will be taken into account. I would also like to mention that so far as the Railway is concerned, in view of the constant inputs of the technology and the changing traffic pattern, the Railways have been carrying out its duty to identify its activities and also making sufficient strength by way of manpower available for running new and expanded activities.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Second supplementary, please.

SHRI TAPAN KUMAR SEN: Sir, my first supplementary question earlier was whether the sanctioned position was revised downwards; it has not been replied and I seek your protection. What is the use of asking another question if a concrete reply does not come? I had specifically asked whether the sanctioned Group-D posts are revised downwards. I may be wrong. Whatever I got is from the railway-papers!

KUMARI MAMATA BANERJEE: Sir, whatever he is asking, my colleague, Shri Ahammedji has already replied that question; it is a continuous process. I have mentioned already that there are problems with the RRBs. After the examinations for the posts, interview has been called...

SHRI TAPAN KUMAR SEN: That is not my question, Madam.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Mr. Sen, please listen. ...*(Interruptions)*... Please resume your place and let the answer be given.

KUMARI MAMATA BANERJEE: If you intervene, how am I going to reply?

SHRI TAPAN KUMAR SEN: I would like to know whether the sanctioned posts have been decreased.

KUMARI MAMATA BANERJEE: Whatever sanctioned posts are needed for the Railways, what we need today is very much there. Are you satisfied?

SHRI TAPAN KUMAR SEN: I am sorry, I am not, because it is not replied.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The second supplementary please.

SHRI TAPAN KUMAR SEN: Well, the problem is that when a question is asked to get reply, the reply comes the other way! It is unfortunate.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The reply has been given and ask the second supplementary question.

SHRI TAPAN KUMAR SEN: Anyway, it is for you to judge whether the reply has been given or not.

My second supplementary question is: In (b) and (e), it is replied that the Indian Railways are not directly connected with the number of persons engaged by the contractors, therefore, such figures are not maintained by the Railways. As per the law of the land, which still exists and which still could not be changed despite all efforts, the Contract Labourer (Regulation and Abolition) Act, 1970, puts an obligation on the principal employer to keep track of the contract labourers deployed by them. Because, that Act wants the principal employer to see to it that all the law of the land are made applicable to the contract workers. For that, they need to keep the track On this position, your statement that you do not keep such figures clearly shows that as a principal employer it is a failure in discharging that statutory obligation towards the contract workers.

I would like to know whether the hon. Railway Minister will consider this aspect of obligation under the Contract Labourer (Regulation and Abolition) Act, 1970, as a principal employer of Railways, would start keeping track of the figures. पहले जो हो गया, हो गया। But, at least, henceforth, would an assurance be given?

SHRI E. AHAMMED: Mr. Chairman, Sir, I emphatically say that it is not an obligation on the Railways to keep the list of contract labourers. I would like to bring to the notice of the hon. Member a judgment passed by the hon. Supreme Court dated 10.4.2006, which has taken away the right of the party to be included in the permanent job. I would just quote the Supreme Court order: "High Courts, acting under article 226 of the Constitution of India should not ordinarily issue directions to absorb them, regularisation or permanent continuation in terms of the Constitution scheme. A total

embargo on the casual temporary employees is not possible given the exigencies of administration." Sir, it is the most important thing.

SHRI TAPAN KUMAR SEN: Sir, I had asked. ...*(Interruptions)*...

MR. CHAIRMAN: Please listen to the answer. ...*(Interruptions)*... I am afraid, this is not going to help matters. ...*(Interruptions)*... Let the Minister complete the answer. ...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRI E. AHAMMED: Sir, the hon. Supreme Court has given this judgment.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Let the answer be completed. ...*(Interruptions)*... Please do not interrupt.

SHRI E. AHAMMED: I quote the Supreme Court judgment: "There is no fundamental right in those who have been employed on daily wages or temporarily or on contractual basis to claim that they have a right to be absorbed in service. As long as they have no right....

MR. CHAIRMAN: Please sit down. ...*(Interruptions)*... We cannot have a wider debate on this. Please resume your places.

SHRI TAPAN KUMAR SEN: I seek your protection, Sir. ...*(Interruptions)*...

MR. CHAIRMAN: You asked a supplementary question... (Interruptions)... Mr. Vijayaraghavan, please do not interrupt. I am afraid, this is happening much too frequently. ...*(Interruptions)*... Just one minute. ...*(Interruptions)*... Just one minute, please. ...*(Interruptions)*... एक मिनट ठहरिए ...(**व्यवधान**)... आप जरा बैठ जाइए ...(**व्यवधान**)... Let the hon. Minister clarify the position. ...*(Interruptions)*... Please resume your place. ...*(Interruptions)*... Please resume your place. ...*(Interruptions)*... I will be compelled to invoke the rules if you keep interrupting in this manner. ...*(Interruptions)*... Please do not argue with the Chair, ...*(Interruptions)*... Please do not argue with the Chair. ...*(Interruptions)*... Please go ahead.

KUMARI MAMATA BANERJEE: Sir, I appreciate my colleague, Mr. Ahammed for whatever he quoted because he has quoted some law. He quoted the legal position and that is why he gave the reply from a legal point of view. ...*(Interruptions)*... Yes, in our country there are so many contractors and contractual labour also. They should tell me which are the Governments that are not giving contractual work to the contractors. Even I will appreciate their Governments, wherever they are in power, if they tell me why they have given work to the contractors. They started the contractual labour. Sir, it is not that we started the contractual labour. It is the freedom of the people. There are some businessmen, there are some contractors, and they can depute their people. Why should the Department take responsibility for that? It is their responsibility. Whatever is within the jurisdiction of the Railways, to that extent, we will give full protection to our railway employees. But we cannot take responsibility for the contractual labour because this is not within our jurisdiction. ...*(Interruptions)*...

MR. CHAIRMAN: Please ...*(Interruptions)*...

श्री रवि शंकर प्रसाद : सर, ...(**व्यवधान**)...

†**श्री मोहम्मद अमीन** : महोदय, रेलवे रिक्रूटमेंट बोर्ड ने यह सिफारिश की थी कि 2007-08 में 23,588 लोगों को ग्रुप सी में लिया जायेगा। इसमें से अब तक कितने लोगों को लिया गया है? साल 2008-09 के लिए रेलवे रिक्रूटमेंट बोर्ड ने क्या कोई सिफारिश की है या नहीं?

جناب محمد امین : مہودے، ریلوے ریکروٹمنٹ بورڈ نے یہ سفارش کی تھی کہ 2007-08 میں 23،588 لوگوں کو گروپ سی میں لیا جائے گا۔ اس میں سے اب تک کتنے لوگوں کو لیا گیا ہے؟ سال 2008-09 کے لئے ریلوے ریکروٹمنٹ بورڈ نے کیا کوئی سفارش کی ہے یا نہیں؟

KUMARI MAMATA BANERJEE: Sir, we did not have such type of information. I will give you entire detail and if you have any information you can send it to me also. ...*(Interruptions)*...

श्री राजनीति प्रसाद : सर, हम लोग ...(**व्यवधान**)... हम लोगों को क्वेश्चन पूछने दीजिए न ...(**व्यवधान**)...

MR. CHAIRMAN: Please. ...*(Interruptions)*... Please. ...*(Interruptions)*... Would you please allow the supplementary question to be asked? ...*(Interruptions)*... I am afraid. ...*(Interruptions)*... Please go ahead. ...*(Interruptions)*... No, please. ...*(Interruptions)*...

श्री राजनीति प्रसाद : सर, रेलवे एक बृहद् निकाय है और इसमें रोज़गार की काफी गुंजाइश है। मैं रेल मंत्री महोदया से यह जानना चाहता हूं कि अभी-भी बहुत सारी पोस्ट वेकेंट हैं और जिन पोस्ट्स को वेकेंट रखा गया है, उनकी भरपाई कब तक होगी? मेरा सवाल बस इतना ही है कि अब तक उनकी भरपाई क्यों नहीं हो रही है? मुझे कोई हल्ले या हंगामे वाला सवाल नहीं पूछना है।

कुमारी ममता बनर्जी : सर, मैंने पहले भी कह दिया है कि भर्ती होगी, लेकिन चूंकि हम आरआरबी को रिव्यू करने जा रहे हैं इसलिए इसमें थोड़ा समय लगेगा। एक बात और भी है कि आरआरबी का इग्ज़ाम होता है। आज Regional aspiration इतना ज्यादा हो गया है, I appreciate that, लेकिन इसको हम थोड़ा रिव्यू करेंगे। इसके लिए हम लोगों को थोड़ा वक्त तो देना चाहिए। हम लोगों को भर्ती करेंगे, लेकिन अभी क्या पोज़ीशन है, क्या सैंक्शन किया गया था, कौन-कोन से इंटरव्यू लिए गए थे, कितने हुए थे, इन सबकी पोज़ीशन को देखते हुए हमें पूरी परिस्थिति की जांच करनी होगी, क्योंकि यह बहुत ही इम्पॉर्टेंट सवाल है।

SHRI RAMA CHANDRA KHUNTIA: Sir, what I would specifically like to know from the hon. Minister is this. Sir, we have the law of the land for 3 per cent reservation for physically handicapped and disabled persons. I would like to know whether these posts have been filled up and physically handicapped and disabled persons have got employment. Also, is it a fact that in many places like

†Transliteration in Urdu Script

Orissa, Karnataka and Maharashtra where interviews have already been done, appointments are not being effected? If so, will the Minister take appropriate steps by issuing orders where the interviews have already been done?

KUMARI MAMATA BANERJEE: Sir, I will express my views in this august House that there are some problems for exams also. We appreciate our physically challenged people. We have full sympathy for them. We will do whatever is according to law. We will do whatever is needful but there are some problems arising through RRB exams. Let everything be settled. We will give full importance to the physically challenged people. This is our duty. We are human beings. We are members of the human family. That is why it is our duty.

SHRI BIRENDRA PRASAD BAISHYA: Sir, thousands of posts are lying vacant in the NF Railway and most of the posts belong to either 3rd grade or 4th grade. Taking advantage of the vacancy the Railway authorities of NF Railway have given appointment in the North Eastern Region without advertisement, without any interview. Recently, Sir, I raised the issue in the Railway Budget-2008 also. Sixty persons were appointed in NF Railway, Guwahati. I am very sorry to say that out of 60, not a single person was appointed from Assam and seven North Eastern States. All of them, Sir, were appointed from the North Indian States of our country. Out of 60, 58 were appointed from one of the North Indian States. I demanded an inquiry about the appointment in the NF Railway. The Minister herself in her Budget Speech expressed that she is going to review the recruitment policy. I want to know from our Minister what steps are going to be taken by the Railway Ministry to appoint thousands of vacant posts lying vacant in Assam and to give priority to the son of the soil.

KUMARI MAMATA BANERJEE: Sir, I appreciate the concern of the hon. Member. So, Sir, I appreciate the concern of the hon. Member. North-East is an eight-sister State now. We love North-East Frontier. Yes, Sir, we have received some complaints. Hon. Member also gave me the complaints. We will take care of that. Again and again, I am repeating that in RRB there are some problems. That is why in Guwahati exams could not take place. Even in Maharashtra and Karnataka exams could not take place. Something happened, some *gadbad* happened, there was some *hulla gulla*. We will review the situation. Railway is the lifeline of the nation. We maintain the recruitment from the national point of view but when the problem arises we have to take care of all these things. We will come back after reviewing the position and we will send all the details to the hon. Member.

SHRI BIRENDRA PRASAD BAISHYA: Sir, ...

MR. CHAIRMAN: Please, Mr. Baishya, resume your place.

KUMARI MAMATA BANERJEE: Priority will always be given to North Eastern States and Jammu and Kashmir. It is always in our priority list.

Status of rail projects in Andhra Pradesh

*103. SHRI NANDI YELLAIAH: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state: